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SELECTED POEMS

OLD AND NEW

BY
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ANNIE MATHESON

AUTHOR OF

'THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY,' 'LOVE'S MUSIC,' 'LOVE TRIUMPHANT'
AND OTHER POEMS

London

HENRY FROWDE

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P R E F A C E

The Religion of Humanity has for some time been out of print, and many of the poems published in that book have, through the courtesy of Messrs. Rivington, become a part of the present volume. Special thanks are due to Messrs. A. D. Innes and Co., for permitting the inclusion of several lyrics from *Love Triumphant*, and to Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston and Co., for the extracts from *Love's Music*, as well as to Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Messrs. Isbister and Co., to the proprietors of the *Oxford Magazine*, the *Spectator*, and others.

A few of the poems have not appeared before. The sonnets 'For Dreyfus,' having been written in eager indignation and sympathy while this book was actually passing through the press, are possibly too much touched by the heat and passion of the moment, and hardly give enough honour to those true sons and daughters of France who have, by stupendous effort and at immeasurable sacrifice and risk, done their utmost to right a great wrong.

As for the rest of the book, the harvestings here tied together make a sheaf in which the red poppies may, if offered to my friends, seem to the passer-by

Preface

good for little but to send him to sleep, and the ears of corn hardly worthy to be laid upon the Altar. Yet, even in so limited a field, where the harvest itself is only what may be carried in the hand, and where the harvester is smitten with a passionate wish that the ground had been richer and deeper, even here, the plough and the harrow have been busy through many days of many years, that the sun and wind of heaven might not scatter their gifts wholly in vain, and that now and again some garnered seed of the centuries might, when wafted hither, find a fruitful grave. Had the ears been fuller, the grain riper, then, perhaps, even around this handful of harvestings, having nothing else to give, I might in gratitude have entwined the names of London, my birthplace; Oswestry, my first home; Nottingham, always kind to me for my father's sake; New York, Knutsford and Manchester, that long ago helped me to my only years of comparative leisure; and Oxford, the giver of more than can be written.

But, instead of indulging so vain a fancy, it may be permissible to touch for a moment one note in the more serious of the lyrics, which to-day we, many of us, desire to strike more strongly and insistently. It was in the music made by others, in years that are now only a memory, and perhaps some echo of it stole into the faulty and imperfect verses on p. 139, written in days of childhood, and only not re-written because that one little hymn has long ago ceased to seem wholly my own, having passed out of my hands into those of the children in widely-varying religious communities. Some hint of it there may have been in the title to my first published volume, *The Religion of Humanity*, which ventured to claim as a revelation of God all that is highest and

Preface

most beautiful in human life, all that is most positive in a noble Positivism. But these unsatisfying efforts of the past leave an ever-deepening desire to make it ring out more clearly, notwithstanding that no such utterance can ever be other than halting and incomplete; for every individual confession of faith, even by the obscurest citizen of the Church, is of comfort if it be but sincere. In these days, when we are weakening our powers by idle disputations, there is need to assert in chorus—a chorus of deeds perhaps rather than words—the faith that veracity and obedience are of more avail than emotion or controversy, and that the true unity is only to be found in the widest catholicity; the most all-embracing catholicity in the profoundest unity—not in the superficial oneness of outward observance, but that deeper oneness in which those who love are ‘not like to like, but like in difference.’ Is there not a fear lest the liberal traditions of our Church be broken, the true evangel narrowed, by those who call themselves most liberal or most evangelical, and who exalt the importance of the very symbols which they seek to abolish? The beauty of Religion may, like all perfect beauty, be enhanced by plain and austere garments, yet may fitly wear, upon due occasion, the regal splendour of the lilies of the field, if only the plainness be unmarred by soil or ugliness, and if the splendour do not obscure what is divinest under what is meant to express or adorn it. Why spend our time in discussing these outer clothes, if we thereby miss the hand-clasp and the fellowship and all that is above and beyond?

What is positive is always stronger than what is negative, though both may be gallant and faithful, and

Preface

in the true sense ‘pious.’ Christ Himself taught that Christianity is only the flower of a noble Judaism, which does more than fulfil the law in the joy of its inner meaning. It is too great to fall under the divisions of ‘High’ or ‘Low’ or ‘Broad,’ of ‘Conformist’ or ‘Nonconformist,’ of ‘Christian’ or ‘Heretic’; and the most Christian lives may be those which have not even taken upon themselves the name of Christ.

Our faith stands self-condemned if it go not down into the very depths of the social order and of the individual lot, with a vital and re-forming power. For do we not believe that Christianity is deeper and wider than any number of ceremonies and opinions? Ought it not to be a Sacrament of body and of soul, which includes all the sacraments and the whole of life—a Sacrament in which the outward sign is worse than nothing if there be not at least some faintest promise or beginning of the inward and transforming grace?

October 6, 1899.

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POEMS

NEW YEAR'S EVE

RELENTLESS Time, why drive so fast?—
A little tarry!

Lest we be quite worn out at last,
And crowding Future crowded Past
Too quickly marry,
Ere we on God the burden cast
Of all we carry.

‘Worn out? A better garb, my dear,
I have in keeping.

Firm hold the reins, while, straight and clear,
Undazzled by your hurrying fear,
Unblurred of weeping,
Your eyes confront another year
With gaze unsleeping!

‘ My hand is on the chariot wheels,
Though perils flout you!
When horses bolt and vision reels,
While sheer dismay your courage steels,
And all men doubt you,
Your throbbing heart my own heart feels—
My arm’s about you! ’

New Year's Eve

To Time I spake, O Love, but Thou,
Thou—all I needed—
Hast answered, and his chariot now
Is all transformed, I know not how:
Well reined and heeded,
It turns Thy field, O Love, a plough
Divinely speeded !

A SONG OF HANDICRAFTS

THE WEAVER.

SUNLIGHT from the sky's own heart,
Flax unfolded to receive :
Out of sky and flax and art,
 Lovely raiment I achieve—
Earth a part and heaven a part,
God in all, for Whom I weave !

THE CARPENTER.

Deep into the wood I hew,
A message fell from the sun's lip ;
Fire and strength it downward drew
 For the faggot and the ship :
God's own, in the forest, grew
Timber that I hew and chip.

THE MASON.

Out of clay or living rock
I will make my brick or stone :
At the door of God I knock,
 Builder whose command I own,
Who can birth and death unlock,
And in dust can find a throne.

A Song of Handicrafts

CHORUS.

Mighty Craftsman ! craftsmen, we,
 Feel Thy spirit in our hands :
All the worlds are full of Thee—
 Wake our eyes and break our bands—
Servants, and for ever free,
 Sons, and heirs of all Thy lands !

THE SNOW

WHEN freezing winter smites the whirling globe,
I kiss the lingering flowers that look afraid,
And smooth the graves, where, like a folded robe
The worn-out bodies, that men love, are laid.

As noiseless as the deepest love I fall,
As mute and tender and divinely pure ;
When sunshine comes, I hide away from all
In roots that make the coming blossoms sure.

For many weary folk that, homeless, fare,
Having no roof, and bidden still move on,
I make a bed where they, forgetting care,
Will wake with sweeter words to think upon.

For are not softest snow and fiercest flame
The angels and the ministers of One
Who writes the symbols of His secret Name
In all the universe of star and sun ?

THE CHRISTMAS CHILD

We see not God, yet while we grope,
Some message, stealing softly in,
Through little children, breathes of hope
Amid the darkness and the din,—
Some fragrant bloom or sunbeam ray
At play.

Oh, wondrous eyes, that often seem
To look through all the veils of time,—
Your tears and laughter all a dream,
Your boundless love and trust sublime,—
As though, through a mere Baby-child,
Love smiled!

Eternal Child! With joy we know
That in the infinite of Love,
Where heavenly fires, commingling, glow,
Where broods the Comforter, the Dove,
Within the Godhead's very heart
Thou art!

The Christmas Child

And still we love (we speak as fools),
In all the greatest souls on earth,
Beyond the wisdom of the schools,
The immortal child ; through pain or mirth,
Their grave simplicities that shine,
Divine.

Therefore we needs must find in Him
In whose fair image man was made,
More beautiful what here is dim,
All light what here is mixed with shade,
And, in His symbol undefiled,
A Child!—

The Christmas Child, the Mother fain,
And afterward, when time was ripe,
The Man confronting all men's pain—
A symbol and a threefold type :—
These all in parable fulfil
His will.

If we, for party or for self,
Or in our careless, supine ways,
Despoil a child of childhood's self,
That sin the Holy One betrays,
Like Pilate's deed, that sacrificed
The Christ.

The Christmas Child

God! if we hunger for the bliss
 Of children toiled for and caressed,
In Thee is all we seemed to miss:
 Oh, clasp us in Thy joy and rest,
Still serving every child we see,
 For Thee!

O Christmas joy and Christmas pain—
 What are they in the eternal sum?
Love does not count of loss or gain,
 If only the beloved one come.
Come, Heart-of-Peace amid the strife,
 Our Life!

THE SONG OF THE SUMMER

YES, I am here! I flower in all the trees,
I touch your lips with soft and lavish air,
I waft my fragrance on the passing breeze—
And my despair!
And my despair; for, as I come, I go—
And whence I come you know, and whither, know;
Lo, fruit must follow, ripe and round and fair.

Oh, short-lived sweetness, brief as mortal bliss,
A breath, a glory—shadow still behind!
The artist's passion or the lover's kiss,
That bless their kind!
That bless their kind, though both on earth
may meet
Earth's loss and bitterness and long defeat,
Till death give joy and vision to the blind.

Yes, I am here, the Spirit of all bloom,
The secret ecstasy of ends fulfilled,
I, Summer, rushing on my chosen doom,
For harvest willed.
For harvest willed, and white with blossom now—
White? Rainbow-hued!—trees, flowers, grasses
bow,
With promise burdened and with summer
thrilled!

FAC ET SPERA

'It is not incumbent on thee to complete the work ; but thou must not therefore cease from it.'—*Talmud.*

TIME may have taken
The dreams that were dearest :
The work that lies nearest
Must not be forsaken.

Youth's joyous passion
Of faith may have left us :
Pain has not bereft us
Of hands that can fashion.

Obey then the Master !
The furnace is steady,
The bruised metal ready ;
Strike, welding it faster !

And when we have finished
Our span's-breadth of action,
That seemed but a fraction,
Dull, dwindled, diminished,

Fac et Spera

Then He, who is able
To mould it, will take it,
Our fragment, and make it
One link in the cable.

No hurry will speed it.
Yet cease not, nor tarry :
For this chain must carry
As long as men need it.

THE MIST

THE sun and the dew were so far apart,
The world would have said they could never
have met,
But the sun looked down with a burning heart
When the earth with the crystal dew was wet;
So the dew went up in a golden mist—
 And they kist,
Till the dew came back at the close of day,
 In a robe of the colour of amethyst,—
And a crown of pearls on the green earth lay,
 Like tears of hope and of wild regret
That told of an unforgotten tryst,
 Ere the sun had set.

HUMAN BEAUTY

‘Lilied flesh—

Beneath her Maker’s finger when the fresh
First pulse of life shot brightening the snow.’

SORDELLO.

FAIR shrine and symbol of God’s loveliest creature,
As beautiful in faultless form and feature
As some white lily in the sunshine grown,
Or blushing rose whereon the sun is shining,
And over which the dewy winds have flown!

Such curves have silver clouds with rosy lining
Through which the sun, to feathery gold refining,
Gazes in heaven’s own light through earth’s
own cloud,
So shadowing forth, and through the mist
revealing,
The very splendour fogs of earth would shroud.

Sometimes, the source of heavenly light unsealing,
Some tender thought of radiant help or healing
The lovely eyes with wondrous meaning fills,
And all the slender lamp, of God’s own making,
With hidden fire of love an instant thrills.

Human Beauty

Fair body, of the soul's own joy partaking,
A temple where, at every new awaking,
 A Presence burns within the enlightening flame,
That flame of life mysteriously given,
 For ever sacred to the Holy Name !

Not sinless, yet, at last, when thou hast striven
To obey the inward light, though tempest-driven,—
Renouncing heaven at the call of Duty,—
In flames, that then leap higher, shall be riven
 The base-born bonds that threaten human dust,
And forth shall flash the strange immortal beauty
 Of that Shekinah given to thy trust !

LONDON POEMS

LOVE'S COSMOPOLITAN

(A SONNET DEDICATED TO LONDON'S CATHEDRAL OF
SAINT PAUL THE TENTMAKER.)

'Nor can we forget that the great Apostle of faith has yet placed faith below love.'—CLAUDE G. MONTEFIORE (on St. Paul) in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*.

APOSTLE, citizen, and artisan !
About thy vast cathedral, through the street
Is hurrying tramp of multitudinous feet ;
But far within, for many a homeless man
Thy shrine is home, where, for a passing span,
Cool silence stills the heart's tumultuous beat :
Before the altar he may rest and eat
Who has not broken bread since day began.
Thou who didst glory in the uplifted cross
Whereby ascended Love, self-sacrificed,
Draws all men near, and heart to heart a few,
Thou who didst count the world for love but loss,
Hail, chosen servant of the risen Christ,
Ambassador of God, great-hearted Jew !

A SONG FOR WOMEN

WITHIN a dreary narrow room
That looks upon a noisome street,
Half fainting with the stifling heat,
A starving girl works out her doom.

*Yet not the less in God's sweet air
The little birds sing, free of care,
And hawthorns blossom everywhere.*

Swift ceaseless toil scarce wins her bread :
From early dawn till twilight falls,
Shut in by four dull ugly walls,
The hours crawl round with murderous tread.
*And all the while, in some still place,
Where intertwining boughs embrace,
The blackbirds build, time flies apace.*

With envy of the folk who die,
Who may at last their leisure take,
Whose longed-for sleep none roughly wake,
Tired hands the restless needle ply.
*But far and wide in meadows green
The golden buttercups are seen,
And reddening sorrel nods between.*

A Song for Women

Too pure and proud to soil her soul,
Or stoop to basely gotten gain,
By days of changeless want and pain
The seamstress earns a prisoner's dole.

*While in the peaceful fields the sheep
Feed, quiet; and through heaven's blue deep
The silent cloud-wings stainless sweep.*

And if she be alive or dead
That weary woman scarcely knows,
But back and forth her needle goes
In tune with throbbing heart and head.

*Lo, where the leaning alders part,
White-bosomed swallows, blithe of heart,
Above still waters skim and dart.*

O God in heaven! shall I, who share
That dying woman's womanhood,
Taste all the summer's bounteous good
Unburdened by her weight of care?

*The white moon-daisies star the grass,
The lengthening shadows o'er them pass;
The meadow pool is smooth as glass.*

THE LONDON ALMOND-TREE

IN desolate streets of London town,
When all the wind is in the east,
And hope is faint and joy is least,
And life a chequered grey and brown;
Then faring drearily along,
What sets the prisoned spirit free
To break its bars and hear the song
Sung by the blossoming Almond-tree?

What but the vision strange and sweet
Of leafless branches touched by God
Until, like Aaron's blossoming rod,
Our unbelieving eyes they meet
With vision of the flowering peach—
Less lavish, yet more fair to see;
And love, like music, seems to reach
Our hearts from out the Almond-tree!

On leafless boughs rose-petals bloom
And chant, though not to outward ear,
The runes a listening soul may hear
Till lightened of its weight of gloom;

The London Almond-Tree

The world seems then less wintry cold,
Unkindness less unkind, and we
Hear whispers of a love untold
Under the blossoming Almond-tree.

The dead, the absent, are not far,
And in the stony London street
The unseen messengers may meet
Who come from where the angels are;
For Jacob's ladder still is set
Where least men look its light to see:
Such embassies may still be met
Beneath a London Almond-tree.

LONDON

LET shepherds carol of the pearly mead
Where all is innocent and all is fair :
Sweet is the dewy breath of country air,—
May Love in holidays me thither lead !
But the great city with its aching need,
Its human load of passion and of care,
Cries to my heart, bids me arise and dare,
And do her service with unhasting speed.
Too sad her tune for any shepherd's lips,
Pan may not pass her gateways with his flute :
I love her, less for her imperial state,
Her lovely dome, her river with its ships,
Than for the spark of God within the brute,
The human soul not yet regenerate.

A DISCORD

THE buds were out on the lilac-trees,
And the almonds blossomed like Aaron's rod ;
The smell of the earth was in the breeze,
And the fragrant sunshine breathed of God.

But, up in an attic cold and bare,
A worn-out woman bowed the head ;
Her only daughter, her love and care,
That sweet spring morning, was lying dead.

LONDON'S POET

(THREE SONNETS, THE FIRST WRITTEN WHILE ROBERT BROWNING WAS LIVING IN LONDON, THE OTHERS AFTER HE HAD DIED IN VENICE.)

I.

LONDON, thou hast thy poet ; lift thy head !
Florence may find sweet homage in his lays,
But thou,—thou art his home, with thee he stays ;
And in his poems loving eyes have read
Thy very self ; the multitudinous tread
Of that quick motley throng that crowds thy ways,
Where all the game is tangled, and who plays
For this world only, wins a stone for bread.
Standing on solid earth, with heaven above,
The squalor and splendour of life thy poet sees,
The sordid seeming, and the fact divine ;
Grim byways, lacking not their almond-trees,
And, in the midmost noise and whirl, a shrine,
A sacred altar to the Lord of Love.

II.

OH, woman-country wooed not wed,' fair land,
Beloved by her to whom his troth held fast,
We will not grudge his presence at the last,
For he was ours: yea, even we who stand
Afar from those who may as friends command
Years full of blissful memories, death being past,
We claim him, though we mourn with eyes
downcast,
The sadder that we never touched his hand.
O Italy and England ! In one bond
He binds you both by the brave words he said,
With his new country. Well his part was conned
For this world's task : no visionary fond,
But a strong man, true to the quick and dead,
He drew death's veil aside, and looked beyond.

III.

LOVER of God and man ! To some thou art
A great philosopher, a stalwart mind,
A jester, and a poet skilled to find
Beneath life's motley coat the poor fool's heart ;
A passionate singer, with quick eye to part
Evil from good when they are intertwined
As if one strand, and patiently unwind
The golden thread into the heavenly mart :
Yea, but a leader too, whose word inspired,
And doubt-destroying laughter, bade believe
Even in the desert ; striking, thou didst cleave
The rock for water ; and didst march, untired,
Before us toward the promised country, fired
With joys of which nor death nor hell bereave.

THE CITY CLERK

(WHEN HIS CHILD LAY DYING.)

I THINK of her when sunshine falls
Across my dingy office walls,
And when the birds outside confer,
 I think of her.

When airs of paradise I meet
From violets, in a London street,
That breathe a dewy sweetness wild,
 I miss my child.

While dainty pigeons pick their way
Round great St. Paul's, I, day by day,
When doves are flying round the dome,
 See mine at home.

My blossom lies so still and pale,
The world were light within the scale
If that grave angel drawing nigh
 Would pass her by.

UNIFICATION

'As a city that is at unity in itself.'—*Ps.* cxxii. 3.

I.

O 'DIM, rich city' of the quick and dead,
With ample dome and solemn minster crowned,
Where rest the peaceful bones of men renowned,
Amid the restless throng who toil for bread !
How hardly is thy weary riddle read !
How slowly is its destined answer found !
For some, indeed, have all things and abound,
And some, alas ! have neither board nor bed.
Whenor thy glooming Thames the sunlight gleams,
I wonder, seeing how beautiful thou art,
What blood and tears thy ransom still may
cost.
Brave sons and true thou hast, and noble dreams,
But ever, deep within thy passionate heart,
I hear the muffled moaning of the lost.

II.

' ONE ' art thou ?—One ?—When by the outer wall
Of church and palace, patient men in vain
Ask room to live, or grind their souls for gain
Of such poor pittance as to slaves may fall,
While men, their brothers, with enough for all,
Pass by, unhelping, though to help them fain,
Being burdened with their secret share of pain,
Or by their dead traditions held in thrall ?—
The Master-mason, still our Strength and Song,
Inspires the labour that shall never cease,
Rebuilding all that has been basely done,
Redeeming order, righting cruel wrong,
Till thou art crowned with righteousness and
peace ;
Though mortal, in Immortal love made one.

THE FIRST SPRING DAY IN LONDON

ON rainbow-rifted clouds,
On dingy-hearted crowds,
On London roofs and on the dusky river,
Apollo scatters from his heavenly quiver
 New light and song :
In human souls our cold estrangements sever,
His breath, that is the breath of God for ever,
 Undoes the wrong,
And stirs the winter-frozen love that never
Was heir of death, yet dreamed of death so long :
Sweet arrows shiver
 Through sacred dust, to make the inmate strong.

On grimy window-sills,
Celestial sunshine thrills
Awaking snowdrops, and is softly stealing
Through smoky panes to bless the folk with healing.
 Around Saint Paul's,
Now iris-bosomed birds, in love excelling,
Are cooing ; and in many a stricken dwelling,
 On prisoning walls,
A gleam of God, of wondrous worlds foretelling
That know not space nor time, a moment falls,
And life, revealing
 Eternal life, sets free earth's spell-bound thralls.

FOR DIVERSE VOICES

LUCY TO RAVENSWOOD

OH, shall sweet roses scent the air
Although they hidden be,
And yet my soul be unaware
When thy soul dreams of me ?

And shall a rough wind hurt my cheek
Because the sky is cold,
Yet I not hear thy sorrow speak
Or feel thy joys unfold ?—

Shall birds to find a land unknown
Fly o'er the wintry sea,
But thou not seek me, O, my own,
And I not trust in thee ?

LOVE

OH, what is love?—a hope, a dream?—
 The secret source of upward strife!
The pain that will from death redeem—
 The life of life!

A bliss in agony; at last,
 As One Whose Name is Love has willed,
The peace that comes when storm is past
 Through faith fulfilled.

At first, the waking throes of birth,
 A quickening goad, a smiting rod;
At last, the crowning grace of earth,
 The restful ecstasy of God!

SLEEP

'And all the air a solemn stillness holds.'

SOFT silence of the summer night
Alive with wistful murmurings,
Enfold me in thy quiet might :
Shake o'er my head thy slumb'rous wings,
 So cool and light :
Let me forget all earthly things
 In sleep to-night !

Tired roses, passionately sweet,
Are leaning on their cool green leaves,
The mignonette about my feet
A maze of tangled fragrance weaves,
 Where dewdrops meet :
Kind sleep the weary world bereaves
 Of noise and heat.

White lilies pure as falling snow
And redolent of tenderness,
Are gently swaying to and fro,
Lulled by the breath of evening less
 Than by the low
Music of sleepy winds, that bless
 The buds that grow.

Sleep

The air is like a mother's hand
Laid softly on a throbbing brow,
And o'er the darksome dewy land
The peace of heaven is stealing now,
While, hand in hand,
Young angels tell the flowers how
Their lives are planned.

From yon deep sky the quiet stars
Look down with steadfast eloquence,
And God the prison-door unbars
That held the mute world's inmost sense
From all the wars
Of day's loud hurry and turbulence :
And nothing now the silence mars
Of love intense.

MRS. NASSAU SENIOR

'Her unreserved self-devotion to the care of all to whom she could minister was inspired by an absolutely single-minded longing for their good, and accompanied by gifts of winning and confiding sweetness, broad, simple, human sympathy, and remarkable uprightness and tenacity of mind, which actually reduced the difficulties and annoyances of her work to a minimum, and enabled her to pass through those which remained with a certain unconscious victory.'—C. E. S., *Spectator*, April 7, 1877.

TRUE woman, gentle and yet strong
To strive with misery and wrong,—
Thy life was like a rhythmic song
 'Mid aimless voices.

The poet whose fine ear has caught
The music with which life is fraught,
Through all discordant deed and thought
 The world rejoices :

He does but listen and translate
For us who stand outside the gate
The spirit of harmonies we mate
 With dullest letter:

Mrs. Nassau Senior

But thou, with patient, loving care,
Didst add a lost note here and there
To the world's symphony, and dare
 To make it better.

His the ecstatic rapture, thine
The dull routine of toil divine,
Where sympathy and skill combine
 In joy most lowly.

We, who still blunder, trying to play
The tune God sets us day by day,
For thy sweet secret, wondering, pray:
 We learn so slowly.

A MEMORY

(*October 1882.*)

WHERE is he! Does he never touch
This old green earth he loved so much,
Or see the golden leaves and red
Whirled softly to their mossy bed
From flaming branches overhead?—

Where is he? Does he never hear
The winds wail for the dying year,
Or, leaning on some fern-grown wall,
Dream, while the quiet shadows fall
Until the darkness covers all?

Where is he now, whose fancies played,
Like laughing stream or leafy shade,
Round those who in the glare of day,
With much their courage to dismay,
Trudged wearily life's dusty way?—

A Memory

Where is he? Many a time perplexed,
With paths foregone his eyes were vexed,
Ah, has death given him life's clue?—
To us he still was kind and true;
His friendship overbrimmed our due.

Where is he?—And what is the goal?—
God only knows: God rest his soul!
Men count our sins, or, scornful, bless
What seems to them our slight success:
God knows the heart's own bitterness.

And God is with him. God, who knew
His whole life, will not misconstrue
Some blotted words men roughly scanned
In life's poor prose, but understand
What poetry his soul had planned.

SWALLOWS

WHEN the light softens just before it wanes
After the splendour of a summer noon,
And honeysuckle fragrance fills the lanes

Where bindweed blossoms will be closing soon
In the cool dew; when the unclouded sky
Leans to the earth, and the wood-pigeons croon

In the still wood; when the greenfinch's cry
Grows plaintive in its lingering drowsiness;—
Then do I watch white-bosomed swallows fly

Hither and thither. Silently I bless
The beautiful swift birds that seem to be
Gifted with life that knows no weariness.

Flashing across the heavenly blue, I see
The curvèd wings, black-pointed, quivering
white,
Yet near the quiet fields and near to me.

Spell-bound, I watch their noiseless airy flight,
The tranquil speed, the rapid, measured grace
That makes of daily action long delight.

Swallows

On the far heaven wide-sweeping curves they trace,
Weaving the distant and the near in one,
As though untroubled by the bounds of space.

I, who am tired before the day is done,
Marvel at those bright wings that never tire,
Cleaving the still air till the summer sun

Goes down behind the hills in golden fire.

Like a brave swimmer must they hourly breast
A baffling element; no strong desire

Could bear them on, were they not ever pressed
By thwarting air, whereon are beating those
Wide-reaching wings, in labour loveliest.

Sometimes a little do their pinions close,
A little moment do they sink to earth;
But in activity they find repose,

Such rest as we may hope for in that birth
The world calls death, or for a moment find,
In some transcendent hour of sacred mirth,

When love some holy secret has divined;
When pain and effort are a deep delight,
And joy is in the heart of grief enshrined.

Fly, swallows, fly! The lark far out of sight,
Like a true poet, brought the glory near,
The nightingale made music through the night,

Swallows

At noon the thrush was singing loud and clear :
Thou hast no song ; no minstrel thou, sweet bird,
Yet more than all the rest I hold thee dear;

For thou in silence hast within me stirred
New strength to rise and seek the unseen goal,
New faith in harmonies by us unheard ;—

The perfect poise that comes of self-control,
The poetry of action, rhythmic, sweet,—
That unvexed music of the body and soul

That the Greeks dreamed of, made at last
complete.—

Our stumbling lives attain not such a bliss :
Too often, while the air we vainly beat,
Love's perfect law of liberty we miss.

A GREETING

SINCE once we crossed a daisied lawn
Beneath an April sky,
The blushing daisies never dawn
But you seem standing by.

And since we lingering stood to see
The evening star burn bright,
Your presence always comes to me
When comes a starry night.

Your every thought an answer gave
To some half-thought of mine,
And still the truths you love, right brave,
My books do interline.

Because you strove with every ill
And wrestled for the right,
Your strength of heart is with me still
In many a lonely fight.

How much less bright was life before
Your shadow on me fell :—
God grant that I may love Him more
Through loving you so well!

SUNSHINE

UPON the white and blushing apple-blooms
In that old garden where the lovers walk,
And on the cold and silent city tombs,

Afar from talk,

O clean and sweet and healing ! On our dust,
On good and evil, just men and unjust,
Divinely common, sent alike for all,
Soft as a blessing, does the sunshine fall.

It kisses little children in the street,
It lights the eyes of lonely men and sad,
It draws new fragrance from the flowers sweet,

It soothes the mad :

Quiet, life-giving, joyous, good,
Warm as the sense of human brotherhood,
To which, since Love's new kingdom first began,
Nothing is alien that is born of man !

THE PROMISE OF SPRING

O DAY of God, thou bringest back
The singing of the birds,
With music for the hearts that lack,
More musical than words !

Thou melttest now the frozen deep
Where dreaming love lay bound,
Thou wakest life in buds asleep,
And joy in skies that frowned.

Not yet may almond-blossoms dare
A wintry world to bless ;
Still do the trees their beauty wear
Of glorious nakedness :

But clouds are riven with the light
Of old unclouded days,
And Love unfolds to longing sight
His sweet and silent ways.

A TIME-WORN TUNE

THE breezes sweep like fairy brooms
Over the fire of crocus-blooms;
The snowdrops white have left their tombs,

And Spring's a-coming!

Soon will the lilac-trees unfold
The hidden blossoms that they hold,
Laburnums shake their clustered gold,
And bees be humming.

O wondrous world, that, year by year,
Grows still more beautiful and dear,
In spite of grief and pain! how clear
Thy heavens are laughing!

How sweet the air, how warm the sun,
How bright the brimming rivers run,
Dimpled by fishes one by one
The sunshine quaffing!

There's many a heart to-day must ache,
Or in the spring-tide glory break,
Though sunbeams all the flowers awake,

Soft kisses giving:

But light and love may others heal
Until, with slow surprise, they feel
A Master-hand to-day unseal
The joy of living!

MEMORY'S SONG

'Causa fuit Pater his.'—*Hor.*

THE Earth cast off her snowy shrouds,
And overhead the skies
Looked down between the soft white clouds,
As blue as children's eyes :—

The breath of Spring was all too sweet, she said,
Too like the Spring that came ere he was dead.

The grass began to grow that day,
The flowers awoke from sleep,
And round her did the sunbeams play
Till she was fain to weep.

The light will surely blind my eyes, she said,
It shines so brightly still, yet he is dead.

The buds grew glossy in the sun
On many a leafless tree,
The little brooks did laugh and run
With most melodious glee.

O God! they make a jocund noise, she said,
All things forget him now that he is dead.

Memory's Song

The wind had from the almond flung
Red blossoms round her feet,
On hazel-boughs the catkins hung,
The willow-blooms grew sweet—
Palm willows, fragrant with the Spring, she said,
He always found the first;—but he is dead.

Right golden was the crocus flame,
And, touched with purest green,
The small white flower of stainless name
Above the ground was seen.
He used to love the white and gold, she said;
The snowdrops come again, and he is dead.

I would not wish him back, she cried,
In this dark world of pain.
For him the joys of life abide,
For me its griefs remain.
I would not wish him back again, she said,
But Spring is hard to bear now he is dead.

PARTING

(WRITTEN FOR MUSIC.)

GOD bless you! God be with you still!
God keep you night and day
When you are far away.
My heart your name will ever bless,
My thoughts the thought of you caress,
And for you pray.

Alone I now must climb the hill;
New faces crowd around,
New voices near me sound:
One dearest voice, and one sweet face
That lights for me the darkest place,
Will not be found.

Yet shall their presence ever fill
Dull Memory's day and night
With longing and delight,
Until, beyond this world of pain,
All that is past is ours again,
And faith is sight.

IN ANSWER

(FOR AN OPERETTA.)

A SUNFLOWER burning on to meet the sun,
A river for the boundless ocean bound,
An arc that trembles toward the 'perfect round,'
Until, the long watch kept, the race all run,
Heart's heart is found!

No foe our secret fortress can betray,
For at the Master's feet the key we cast,
Till earth's estranging destiny be past;
Rejoicing, toiling, through the lonely day,
To meet at last!

To meet at last?—Do we not daily meet,
By grief and distance undivided still,
When through the Mill-wheel, with a sacred
thrill,
We feel redoubled power more nobly beat,—
One life, one will!

A SUMMER'S EVENING

SWEET yearnings unexpressed,

That cannot rest,

Are making music

Full of drowsy pain

And strange delight—

O waken yet again

The dreamy visions bright

That, almost ere I saw them, took their flight.

Joyously sings the thrush ;

Melodies rush

Over my spirit.

Fragrance stealtheth up

Into my heart,

From many a snowy cup

Of lilies white, where dart

The mellow sunbeams and fresh breezes start.

Long lines of opal cloud

Rosily crowd

In sunset glory.

Over distant hills

The twilight creeps,

Till a soft quiet fills

The valleys : turmoil sleeps,

And peace divine the dewy landscape steeps !

LOVE AND KINDNESS

A voice of pity strove to bless
In accents bountifully kind,
But still my grief knew no redress,
Grown mad and blind.

The presence made herself my slave,
Hither and thither came and went:
All that she had poor Kindness gave,
Till all was spent.

She tried to soothe and make me whole :
Her touch was torment in my pain ;
It froze my heart, benumbed my soul,
And crazed my brain.

At last, her duty all fulfilled,
She turned with cheerful ease away,
Yet would have lingered, had I willed
That she should stay.

And lo ! there knelt, where she had stood,
One, wistful as a child might be,
Who blushed at her own hardihood
In helping me.

Love and Kindness

She said no word, she only turned
Her passionate sweet eyes on mine,
Until within my sorrow burned
A bliss divine.

And in that gaze I woke once more
To earth beneath and heaven above :—
This was not Kindness as before,
But only Love.

OF THE HUDSON AND THE THAMES

Now reigns the joyful May time,
The air is blossom-sweet,
As fragrant as the hay-time
When spring and summer meet;
But here in London's very heart, all radiant of
spring,
To a bay as blue as Naples a thought has
taken wing.

I let the Thames go dreaming
Beneath the crowded ships,
Along the Hudson gleaming
My boat her rudder dips,
And under bright, unclouded skies, where all
the world is young,
I meet the faces Memory has often wept and sung.

I clasp the hands I shall not touch
Till deeper seas are past,
I look on eyes that gave me much
When I looked back at last;
Though death has snapped the cable, yet love that
understands
May leave the broken message in Love's unerring
hands.

*SONG FROM A CHRISTMAS
COMEDIETTA*

HE is a fool who thinks he loves in vain,
Love, lost or won, is still eternal gain.

Fate cannot sever
Hearts once made one that they should dwell alone:
O soul, what thou hast truly made thine own
Is thine for ever.

No love is wasted and no light is lost,
Who gives himself, however great the cost,
Is richer giving;

And those we love are ours, whate'er their lot;
Those who are dead, and those who love us not
Among the living.

Lo, loving the unloving here below,
A wider love within our hearts will grow
For all about us:

Our best beloved are ours for ever, though
Their lives might be as sweet, for aught we know,
Were they without us.

IN SERIOUS MOOD

TO A LITTLE CHILD

CLEAR eyes of heaven's chosen hue
When not a cloud is seen above
To fleck the warm untroubled blue,
A little laughing face of love;

A boundless energy of life
In dimpled arms and rosy feet:
No breath of care, no touch of strife,
Has dulled thy glad heart's rhythmic beat.

So girt about with golden light,
By shadows still so little vexed,
That many a weary anxious wight
Grows in thy presence less perplexed.

Our smiles come at thy fairy beck,
Frowns pass away at thy caress;
When thy soft arms are round my neck
I feel God's wondrous tenderness.

A CHRISTMAS LYRIC

STILL, as of old, the wise men scan,
Before the Epiphany through the night,
The heavenly roof God gave to man :
O Light, reveal to them Thy light !

Thou, who dost lead their journeying far
Who learn Thy lore in stars above,
And in our earth, herself a star :
O Love, reveal to them Thy love !

Redeemer of our human lot
For ever since the world began,
To those who serve yet see Thee not,
O God, reveal Thyself in Man !

A NEW YEAR'S HYMN

CONSUMING Fire! Eternal Love!

Who grievest at Thy children's tears,
Yet, seeing further than the years,
A deeper deep, a height above,
A life nor time nor space can move,
Dost light unseen by shadows prove
And with a rainbow veil the sun—
Across the deluge guide the dove!
Soul of our life and of our love,
Thy will be done!

Years come and go and sweep away

The landmarks that we strove to make:
Through what they leave and what they take,
Build Thou the life that's more than they,
And fill with light of heavenly day
All we have built, now cold and grey
As cobwebs in the darkness spun:
Breathe health into our work, we pray:
Beyond the best we dream or say,
Thy will be done!

We trust not for ourselves alone

But for Thy boundless universe!—
Evolve the better from the worse;
Wake fountains in the flinty stone;

A New Year's Hymn

From fields the cruel scythe has mown
Draw fragrance: when the swallow's flown
 And summer's past for every one,
By ripened harvest, slowly grown
From seed that patient hands have sown,
 Thy will be done!

Not only through heroic pain
 Divinely met and bravely borne,
Not only by the crown of thorn,
The loss that touches highest gain,
The fires that vanquish every stain
Till purest loveliness remain;
Not only by the battles won
Through deadly strife that seemed in vain,—
We pray not only in our pain,
 Thy will be done;

But in the hour of joy supreme,
 The gift of powers Thou dost control
When lightnings flash and thunders roll,
The hour diviner than our dream,
That heals our life and makes it whole,
Do Thou Thy will from pole to pole,
O Source of Joy, our Guide and Goal,
 Above the shadow still our Sun!
In many a life's unlettered scroll,
Through bliss of body and of soul,
 Thy will be done!

TEKEL

‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.’

THE bare black branches of the almond-tree
Have blossomed forth with love’s own rosy flowers,
The brooks, that late were frozen, sing for glee,
New leaves are budding in forsaken bowers.

Things buried long
Rise softly as the sun awakes them all.

Birds make sweet song :
Lent lilies newly risen round us throng :
But our dead past its dead will not give up ;
Where gleams the mystic writing on the wall,
That is flashed back from life’s fair drinking cup.

O lovely world, fresh from thy wintry sleep,
Thine Easter parable who runs may read :
Who scorn thy symbols of the feast we keep,
Blind guides are they and blind are those they lead :

But in the light
Of this fair morning many a soul grown hard,
From sound and sight

Tekel

And all sweet influence locked, and dark as night,
Is melted suddenly with holy shame,
And round her dull blank walls—a tomb close
barred—

Reads *Mene Tekel* writ in living flame.

How often, toiling on life's lonely road,
Service to love long owing she forgot:
Will He not say when she lays down her load
'Depart from me, poor soul: I know you not'?
When He was sick, and hungry, and in prison,
She went her way,
Unheeding, in some solemn crowd to pray.

• • • • •
Oh, let us rise and serve Him ere the night,
Nay, rise with Him Who with the dawn has risen.
Lest on the 'whited walls' the Master write.

A thousand altars, on this glorious morn,
Proclaim that He is risen who was dead:
Doth no one hear to-day His sorrowful scorn
For those who give His people stones for bread—
For those who drain
Wealth's glittering bowl of pleasure to the lees,
While want and pain
Murder the poor, who at their gates have lain?—
Are there no faithful servants that He hath
To write in palaces of selfish ease
The *Mene Tekel* of His love and wrath?—

Tekel

Within the Church there stands a spectre grim,
And writes upon her stones as if in grief:
'Tried by thy Lord thou art condemned by Him,
And He has given thee up to unbelief.'

This Easter day,
Although that phantom join with foes without
To strike dismay,

There is one Door whence none are turned away :
Who do the Master's will shall learn His name ;
His riven hands shall rescue them from doubt,
And save His Church from those dark words of
shame.

O Life of life ! Imperishable Love !
Breathe through the stillness of our desolate souls.
O Light of light ! through our great darkness move,
While from the sepulchre Thine angel rolls
The sealèd stone.

Let us no more, each with himself apart,
Struggle alone.

O Light, O Life, O Love, make us Thine own !
Give hope fruition, quell our servile fears,
Nor let the curse fall on our breaking heart
And *Tekel* blaze across the wasted years.

FOR CONCORD

‘That they all may be one.’

THOUGH Love redeem us, do we stake
 Our souls upon the mighty bond,
As brothers, serve for others’ sake,
Till love in hatred’s self awake,
 And love, on this side death, respond
 To love beyond?

Is life, this little life, so long,
 That we its wasting hours should spend
In cherishing eternal wrong,
Or beckoning passions that will throng
 Our reckless path until the end,
 To smite and rend?

If, clutching pleasure, shirking pain,
 We forfeit manhood in the act,
What profit, though the world we gain
And lose ourselves; too late, in vain,
 Find love is gone, and we enact
 The devil’s pact?—

For Concord

From infinite hope and fellowship
Have rung our own dividing knell,
And deep in isolation dip,
Until the heaven, whose key we grip,
The selfish heaven we guard so well,
Is lonely hell ?—

Yet once we felt the life that fills
The boundless universe ; and, lo,
It sweeps through myriad stars, and thrills
The dewy flowers, the dreaming hills
And all the souls that to and fro
Still come and go !

Through sorrow, and loss, and noble rage,
The rapture of the world is wrought,
Of every country, every age,
The one immortal heritage,
Above all joy, beyond all thought,
With wisdom fraught,—

The deepening concord, blissful, tense,
When sympathies divinely mate,
Or differing notes in long suspense,
Uniting, meet their recompense,
And, storming music's inmost gate,
Fulfil their fate !

Lost ! Lost ! Then are we lost indeed
If this, our life, we cast away

For Concord

In snatching all the power we need
To choke our own imperious greed,
Till we, self-murdered day by day,
Lie deep in clay !

The Love once slain, divinely crowned,
Not as a Servant but a Son,
Feels every wound when, trampled, bound,
We suffer and no help is found.
He died that all men might be one :
His will be done !

LE PRINTEMPS VIENT TOUJOURS

As one who loves may seek to find
Some name by all the rest unfound,
For her who dwells within his mind

To comfort and to bless,
As though the secret of the sound

No other might possess ;
So we in alien words enwind,

In foreign phrase caress,
The hope wherein all joys abound.

Is it Winter ? Nevertheless

*'Le printemps vient toujours, toujours,
Le printemps vient toujours.'*

If Fortune's wheel, in moving round,
Give us our turn to be abased,
And low we lie, are straitened, bound,

While storms our treasures rust,
Great Love, Who checks our careless haste,

May, more than Justice just,
Dull Fortune's eyes, Himself, astound,

That turn her wheel she must :
We rise above the wintry waste,
With a song that spurns the ground,
*'Le printemps vient toujours, toujours,
Le printemps vient toujours.'*

Le printemps vient toujours

If some from hope to hope are chased,
Nor covet any worldly wage,
By Duty's sternest mandate placed
 Where selfish hope must die,
Still smiting with a noble rage
 The passions they deny,
With courage and endurance graced
 Though all they longed for fly,
They triumph still from youth to age,
 Till Death as Love is faced :
Then, free at last, for joy they sigh,
‘*Le printemps vient toujours, toujours,*
 Le printemps vient toujours.’

*'THE DISCIPLE IS NOT ABOVE HIS
MASTER'*

Oh, think not o'er a smooth green way
At once through paradise to stray,
With joy beside thee night and day,

If thou wouldst My disciple be :
But where doubt's dreary phantom looms,
Where misery still his victim dooms,
Where devils rage among the tombs,
Follow thou Me !

Not only in the quiet meads
Where wind still waters, and where feeds
The flock that God in pity leads,

Shalt thou My guiding presence see ;
But through the dusty toiling street,
Where famine and temptation meet,
And care strides on with hurried feet,
Follow thou Me !

Leave to the weak ignoble ease !
The blind may grope, but he who sees
Must choose the only yoke that frees
The slave of self, who yet may be

'The Disciple is not above his Master'

My eyes to comfort the distressed,
My hands uplifting the oppressed,
My voice to say, 'Thou weariest,
Follow thou Me!'

To raise the fallen, to love the lost,
To save the soul long tempest-tossed,
By sacrifice that fears no cost;

Still day by day I beckon thee.
Through pain into divinest ruth,
Through death into eternal youth,
Through doubt to everlasting truth,
Follow thou Me!

LIFE AND DEATH

Afraid of Death?—A quiet sleep
In Love's embrace, untroubled, deep,
With no dark dreams of earth perplexed,
No tangled moral problems vexed,—

Afraid of Death?—

Afraid of Death, that waking bright
To higher duties, clearer light,
Where, having bathed in perfect rest,
With perfect vigour he is blest

Who laboureth?—

Afraid of Death, the welcome touch
Of those dear souls we love so much,
Who, having been with us made one,
Wait patient till our task is done?—

Afraid of Death?—

Oh, Life it is, not Death, we fear,
Where through the mist we see not clear,
Where truth still bids us seem unkind,
And faith so often falters blind

Through foolish dreams:

Where Time will suffer no delay
But drives us on from day to day;

Life and Death

Where Duty at the cross-road stands,
And, stretching right and left her hands,
Bewildered seems.

' Both paths are mine,' she seems to say,
' Yet each from either leads away :
Both paths are mine, nor harm shall lack
To him who, taking one, turns back
 To look again.'

Oh, it is Life that bids us choose
The ventures that may gain or lose,
Not our slight erring souls alone
But souls far dearer than our own,
 For joy or pain.

Life's sweetest harmonies are wed
With solemn discords harsh and dread :
His awful beauty seems to burn
The upward, longing gaze we turn
 To meet His glance.

He leads us through a puzzled maze
Where honest purpose often strays,
And love toils on till evening chime,
Still manacled by space and time
 And circumstance ;

Where oft we wound the hearts we fain
Would shield from every touch of pain,
And, striving to bestow a good,
May learn too late our hardihood :
 Where, day by day,

Life and Death

Our keenest joys are touched with fear
That we may lose what is most dear :
Where random words, that were not meant,
We may in agony repent
 But not unsay.

It is not Death we fear, but Life.
Yet he who turns him from the strife,
And, ere the day is won or lost,
In coward haste will leave his post
 And deathward fly,
A thing for pity and for scorn,—
Far better he had not been born,
Or, having fought, ignobly failed,
Than thus before the onset quailed
 And sought to die.

Oh, save us from that lowest shame,
Thou of the secret wondrous Name,
That we may learn and understand,
And out of Thine almighty hand
 Life's secret wrest !

If till the dawn with Thee we strive,
We shall at last have strength to live,
And, having wrestled through the night,
Shall see Thy face with morning light,
 And shall be blest.

DEATH AND LIFE

O DEATH! when all my tasks are done,
And Life has yielded up
The hidden joys that, one by one,
 Make sweet his bitter cup,
Then only, at the set of sun,
 Come thou with me to sup.

Thou art but Life in brief disguise,
 And, ere we sup, wilt lay
Thy domino of sombre dyes
 Within my tomb away,
Then flash on my delighted eyes
 As Life, in Life's array.

That night put no new jewels on
 But wear thy time-worn dress,
No kindlier garment canst thou don,
 Nor shall I love thee less—
The hurried air will then be gone
 That mars thy loveliness:

Death and Life

Despite the mystery and pain
That blend with love and bliss,
For life hereafter we are fain,
Not wholly unlike this,—
But life more vital, to regain
What we, through weakness, miss.

O Death! I called thee once a friend
Of whom I had no fear:
(Stern Life, on me his brows would bend,
Nor seemed his bidding clear),—
But when I saw thee hither wend,
I knew that Life was dear.

When nearer drew the shrouded face,
(Day's work unfinished still),
A terror shadowed all the place,
A prayer possessed my will;
'A little longer grant me grace
While I my day fulfil!'

I heard a hand unlatch my door,
More solemn grew my dread;
No death-like phantom crossed my floor,
But Life himself instead,
His mocking smile, unseen before,
With shamefast eyes I read.

He smiled: 'I did but masquerade
A moment in thy sight,

Death and Life

And wast thou then so sore afraid
 Of thy friend, Death, to-night?—
Go, finish what thy labour made,
 Nor waste the waning light.'

And He at last in Whom I trust,
 When death does frown on me,
Will throw the mask into the dust
 That I true Life may see,
His garb of joy from moth and rust
 Eternally set free.

Familiar Life, but fairer far
 Than shone his earthly grace,
Which care and grief and hurry mar
 And bonds of time and space;
Life always where earth's loved ones are,
 Before Love's unveiled face.

AN APRIL SONG

ROUND the world and through the world,
Under it and over,
Like the light in dewdrops pearled,
Or the scent in clover,
Breathes the sweet and living breath
Of a Love more strong than death.

Grief will come and loss will come,
Saddening many a morrow,
But through all, though often dumb,
Blessing even sorrow,
Love, that knits the souls of friends,
Makes for all divine amends.

Quench not Love, though pain and wrong
Smite the dead and living!
Quit ye like true men and strong,
Vanquish by forgiving,—
Nor in death itself let slip
This life's heavenly fellowship!

THE MAN WHO SAW THE END OF THE JOURNEY

I HAVE known anguish, loss and disappointment,
Touched the hand of madness, met the hope that
 hoped not,

Yet do I love thee, O world, my mortal
 dwelling!

Oh, how I love thee, sweet life that's mixed with
 sorrow,

Fain to lose no fraction of thy tempestuous faring!

Still do the milestones spin past ere I can count
 them :

Soon will the journey with all its strange adventures
Heaven-sent encounters, sweet coincidences ;
All that makes a poem, vivid, ample, mystic ;
Soon will it be over, and will not be repeated.

Voice, faces, heart-beats, all that makes the drama,
I shall have to leave them : though they are mine
 for ever,

They will be transfigured : I would fain remember
Their poor earthly weakness, dear in imperfec-
tion :—

Stay, O Time, thy chariots ; O Memory, seize thy
tablets !

The Man who saw the end of the Journey

Friends, who in a cottage have lived and loved
together,

May sigh when they leave it, though bound for a
palace.

Is it warm with memories, quick with life familiar ?
Earth, ere I leave thee, parting from my dearest,
Hand in hand a moment, let us gaze and love thee !

ELISHA RAISING THE SON OF THE SHUNAMMITE

(SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE.)

O God, my God! *He* could do it,
The prophet of long ago,
As he laid his face on the child's face
In passionate love and woe!
Prayer, was it?—Or touch, or yearning?—
A will that could fear no foe,
Not even the king of terrors?—
'Tis an awful thing to know.

Can it be that had we too wrestled in a prayer that
willed and yearned,
To the hands and feet we were clasping, the soul we
loved had returned?—

O child! Had I dared to do it
When my face was close to thine,
When my lips were warm upon thy lips
And cold was thy hand in mine;—
Had I called thee back without pity
And poured of my strength like wine
Into thy heart when it beat not,
And prayed for a force divine;

Elisha raising the Son of the Shunammite

Had I clasped thy soul till it felt me and held thy
hand till it thrilled,
The God who hears might have answered, I might
have had what I willed.

Could I have done it?—Christ save us!

The prophet indeed might break
That quiet sleep with his praying
For one sad woman's sake:

But had the child been his own child,

He might have feared to take

The hand of God in his own hand

And will that his son might wake;—

He might have trembled at thinking 'My joy may
become his doom:

I will not call him from heaven back to this narrow
room.'

God keep the souls He has taken,

And veil their eyes with His hand,

That they may not grieve in our grieving

Or weep in the deathless land,

Where the speech of love is as music

That none can misunderstand!

But to us in the dust and discord

Grief comes with a new command;

To us it is left to wrestle for souls on earth that are
lost;

Who knows? We may baulk the Devil if we will
not count the cost.

DOCTORS AND NURSES

'The plague has claimed another English victim in Surgeon-Major Evans, Professor of Pathology in the Calcutta Medical College. He is thought to have contracted the disease while engaged in a *post-mortem* examination, and so died at his post in quite as true a sense as the members of the Wilson Patrol or those of the 21st Lancers who fell at Omdurman.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*, March 14, 1899.

A LIFE for saving of life!
Courage, compassion, skill—
A cool and resolute will,
Warring with Death, to the knife,
Death, and worse ill—
Loathsome horrors that fill
A mawkish soul with dismay,
Though to a *man*—a man
Such as God makes to-day
Of His best—
Who gives of his life away
To guard the lives of the rest,
To heal, not to slay—
The hideous things of disease
Are as if they were not! He sees,

Doctors and Nurses

The fighter who grapples with Death,
Only, with bated breath,
The dawning of hope and of light
On the awful dark. He will fight,
He will grip, hand to hand,
To withstand,
For his fellows, the weak and the poor,
All the foul, fell things at the door—
Poison, corruption, and pest!
Many there are who will give
Their strength away daily, just
To lift a life out of dust,
Or help the dying to live.
Doctors? *Warriors* unresting,
Men God makes of His best,
Who serve and make no protesting,
And, living or dying, are blest!

'THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST'

'The safest conclusion seems to me that the whole subject is beyond the scope of man's intellect, but man can do his duty.'—*The Life of Charles Darwin*, vol. i. p. 307.

AND if they saw no visions, heard no voice,
It may be Love hath blessed the deaf and blind
That they by finer touch of hand may find
Some good in which the ages will rejoice.

For, had they chosen, they had chosen this ;
Not that their doubt should here be satisfied,
But that through all which was to them denied
God's universe might hold a deeper bliss.

They saw not God, though He was on their side ;
'Lord, Lord,' they said not ; yet they served
Him well,

For He is Truth, and their whole lives will tell
How they have toiled for truth till eventide.

Now that He calls them home at set of sun,
And they are sad because they dreamed they
might

Have done more perfect work before the night,
They hear with sweet amaze the words 'Well done.'

'The Last shall be First'

And He who knows how hard it was to wait,
Nor hear Him call them through the long
day's strife,
Blind to His presence, yet of blameless life,
Himself unbars for them the vineyard gate.

At last the Master is to them revealed :
He knows they asked not any sordid hire,
And gives as guerdon what they most desire,
In the new life to toil in His new field.

Ah ! some there be who held them once accursed,
Cry, ' Lord, we bore the burden of the day—
Shall we receive no higher wage than they ? '
But He makes answer, ' Lo, the last are first.'

FOR THE WINTERSDORF GUILD

ETERNAL Craftsman, Lord of life,
Unflinching Love!
Command us in the daily strife,
That we may prove
How, by Thy grace,
Fears hide their face
And mountains move.

Let hearts and hands in Thee be one
Yet manifold,
And countless loving deeds be done,
Unseen, untold,
Till fiends withstood
Grow angels good
By Thee controlled!

With toil of love, by love inspired,
In love fulfilled,
Though never loitering, never tired,—
With rapture thrilled
By labour sweet
In Thee complete,
Love, bless our Guild!

'LET THERE BE LIGHT!'

'Work is the universal brightener of the soul's windows.'—
Quoted from CANON HUGH PEARSON in vol. ii. of Jowett's
Sermons.

UP! up, my soul! If doubt you fear,
Make every darkened window clear
 Where sloth and dust have been,
Till once again, with light divine,
The stars into your dwelling shine,
 Eternal and serene!

Up! Whether by the hand or brain,
In dulness, ecstasy, or pain,
 Their ordered task they ply,
Men, like the God, for man, may spend
On what they make, or what they mend,
 The self that will not die.—

Life may be gone before they hear
The Master's voice, or know Him near,
 In earth's rough market-place;
But, through the labour and the din,
Their manhood may its Godhood win,
 Until they see His face:

And He, in work and rest supreme,
Whose art is life beyond our dream,
 Shall then unlock new powers
In power obedient to Him,
Who fashioned stars from chaos dim,
 And, out of refuse, flowers!

*AN EPILOGUE**

AND so the play is over, and we doff
The actor's mask for one more subtle, worn
By those who hide therein from the world's scorn,
Smiling for all to see, when some forlorn
Hope dies, and afar off
They see their doom; or frowning hard perchance
Above joy's secret fires,
When their fulfilled desires
On fluttering wings advance
And round them dance.

The play is over, and 'twas but a play
Within a play; the wider stage still holds
Its tragedy and comedy, replete
With godlike pain and laughter, sweet
Singing, low moans,
And strife that moulds
Our clumsy clay to that complete
Manhood which inly groans

* Written to be recited after a performance of the *Alcestis*
in a country-house.

An Epilogue

Toward Godhood, fain would meet
Once more the vital breath
That made men living souls, and is more than Death,
Life, Love.—

Often above
The murmur of the actors on this stage,
Prattle of youth, and prattle of old age,
Eager discussion of the moment's need
And foolish greed
Of coming morrows, will be heard,
Like music half articulate with passion,
The meaning of it all, that makes the play
Worth playing, and has stirred
Even the pastime of an Easter day
To sudden grandeur, though the passing fashion
Of the mere show has vanished soon away
And only left the meaning. Who shall say
What it does mean?—
The power of Love?—
Joy of self-sacrifice? All that has been
The soul of the world to keep it from its grave?—

Not always, like Alcestis, can Love save
The life of the belovèd. Some have poured
Their lives like water out upon the ground,
Yet scarce availed
To make the road less rough, or the hot dust
Less wearying; these nor quailed
Nor doubted, but with one accord

An Epilogue

Joyed in the sacrifice; and some have stood
 Keeping their trust
 With noble hardihood
In the thick of the battle for an enemy's sake,
 Or for the one they loved who still returned
Their love with hate: yet might not their heart
 break
Until the fight was over, and they learned
 That other life was safe. And a few wait
With patient hands and feet till the God say,
 ‘The sacrificial strife
Is over; thou shalt die:’—Ah! they,
 Set free at last from the life
That was a costlier offering than death,
 Shall with their ebbing breath
 Find then a strange release,
 Shall know at last,
In that great joy, the meaning of the past,
 And in the sudden peace
Where storm and whirlwind cease,
 Bless the tempestuous fate
 That filled their mortal day,
While, in immortal bliss, resplendent, melt away
 The clouds of sunset, veiling heaven's gate.

SONNETS

THE IDEAL WIFE

(WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF NATIONALITY *)

A WIFE whose love has vanquished doubt and fear,
In faith and courage man's eternal mate,
Of reason and of will commensurate !

A loveliness that time will but endear,
Whereof the flower, enfolding, year by year,
A soul more beautiful, with light elate,
Steals sweetness from the winds of adverse
fate—

Like snowy lilies fed with radiance clear !
Man's Home and Comrade,—passionate, pure
and strong,

Among the merry, gay with quip and jest,
To all the sad and lonely, motherhood !—
The heart of him she loves, to war with wrong !
He is her Strength and she to Him is Rest,
Revealing, each to each, Truth, Beauty, Good.

* This sonnet arose out of a foolish discussion in the newspapers as to the ideal wives of differing races.

FOR DREYFUS

(BEFORE THE "PARDON.")

FIRST VOICE.

O TRUTH ETERNAL, in whose Name they mock,
Wound, crucify, not marking how they stain
Thy seamless robe with torture, treachery,
 pain,—

Thee have they flouted in the prison-dock
Who canst the secrets of the world unlock!

O Son of Mary, Jewish Mary, slain
Only to conquer! prison-walls are vain
When on the prison-door they hear Thee knock.

But, for the Jailors, blinded ere they fell,
Poor souls who prayed and wept before they
 swerved,

Them most I pity, each in his own hell,
For friends of all Unrighteousness reserved,—

Still banqueting where unjust stewards dwell,
Their manhood lost, soul twisted, sight unnerved.

For Dreyfus

SECOND VOICE.

AH, what avail compassion, scorn, and hate?
Scorn may ring valiant, pity may be true;
But all your clamours have not saved the Jew
Who looked unblenching in the eyes of fate!—
Amid the agonies that devastate,
Madden and wither, ever strong and new,
Brave, stood his noble hope in God and you,
His fellow-men, and in his fearless mate.

Go break the bars of destiny and move
The mountains: sternly, spoke by spoke,
Reverse the awful power of Fortune's wheel!
Anguish of passion, prayer, and effort prove
Till base Injustice all her game revoke,
While Love and Truth their cryptic word reveal!

GRACE BEFORE MEAT

(AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO CHARLES LAMB.)

Not that the life itself is less than meat,
Not that we give more thanks for being fed
Than for the thoughts, the love, of quick
and dead,
Or all the gifts of art, do we repeat
The sacred Name of Love before we eat ;
But that the Master taught, in breaking bread
The grace of common brotherhood is said,
One heart in Love we are, though millions beat ;
One body, quickened by one living soul,
Through every changing age and clime and race,
By death regenerate, while æons roll
And light immortal lights the mortal face ;
One vital loaf, love leavening the whole,
If broken, pledged in Love's eternal grace.

*CORYDON TO PHYLLIDA WITH A
BUNCH OF AUTUMN VIOLETS*

COULD all the measure of my love be set
Within the compass of one tiny flower;
The yearning thoughts that chase thee hour
by hour,
The trembling hope, sweet fear, and fond regret;—
Could I enfold within one violet
Love's deepest meaning and eternal power,
The dewy sunshine of love's inmost bower,
The charm which, having tasted, none forget;—
Or could a violet, breathing toward thee, tell
What to no other soul I would betray,
Fragrance like music then should find a spell
To utter what no human words could say.
Stoop down, dear love, these autumn violets smell,
And make their message what thou wilt. Farewell.

HARVEST

I.

Now is the harvest gathered in at last
To make bread for the people; full and sound
The ripened ears fell on the fruitful ground
Before the sickle; and the reapers passed;
The maidens followed, stooping to make fast
In golden clusters all the corn they found—
Then, balancing aloft the sheaf new-bound,
They on the heaped-up stood their burden cast;
Until at eventide the loaded wain
Bore homeward all the glory of the field,
And men and maids rejoiced o'er work well done.
Did they remember then the buried grain
That in the darkness long lay hid to yield
Food for the world beneath the summer sun?

II.

LONG had the seed been waiting in the earth,
Deep underground, far from the blessed light,
That heaven's flaming orb, though out of sight,
Might by his power awake to gradual birth
A manifold new life of fuller worth,
More vital being. Long had radiant might,
That scarce was felt, yet ceased not day nor night,
Drawn upward out of passiveness and dearth
Of joyous influence, what the steadfast root
Had won in patience. After blade and bloom
Had come the full ears' slowly reddening gold.
The time of darkness had not failed of fruit,
For now the ripe corn has fulfilled its doom,
And grown and multiplied a hundredfold.

A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

(TO MY FATHER'S FRIENDS ON THE ANNIVERSARY
OF THEIR WEDDING-DAY.)

I.

IN this tumultuous world of joy and fear,—
Hope still deferred, desire not here fulfilled,—
How seldom is the blind wayfarer skilled
To win the flower of this brief mortal year,
Earth's mystic blossom that brings heaven near !
Only a few, strong-hearted, steadfast-willed,
Have gathered it and found Time's murmur
stilled
By secrets all too deep for human ear.
You, who have plucked this one supreme sweet gift
That baffles death and change,—amid the strife
Of our imperfect speech a symbol lent
Of some high mystery,—Love will uplift
Life's daily bread, true husband, faithful wife,
And minister to you God's sacrament.

A Wedding Anniversary

II.

BUT, while for you this marriage-feast is spread,
Perchance new gladness God to you will send,
And he who is my father and your friend
Will cross your threshold, for he is not dead,
Nor will forget the life that here he led.

Although no voice the yearning silence end,
Nor visible presence that dark shadow rend
Which hides him from us, let it not be said
My dream is idle: for I think the Lord
Will give some unsought joy to you to-day
By this dear messenger. Ere he depart,
Will he not bless the children round your board,
His hand on each bright head, caressing, lay,
And gaze upon you both with wistful heart?

*GEORGE ELIOT**

(SUGGESTED BY THE UNVEILING OF A STATUE TO
GEORGE SAND.)

I.

FOR thee we carve no statue : thou hast willed
Other memorial ; a chalice bright
Wrought of the courage doubt could not affright,
Nor death dishearten, with love's offering filled,
Not without anguish ; that thy work, once thrilled
With aspiration, hope, and failure, might
Be made a means of strength in some hard fight,
New force from thine endurance be distilled.
And what was fashioned of thy pain will slake
In mortal suffering much immortal thirst.

Thine eyes beheld but man :—a hand divine
Of every cup so offered yet will make,
Though it be marred by many a flaw at first,
An altar-cup to hold the sacred wine.

*

‘ May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony.’

GEORGE ELIOT.

II.

Not in a dim cool temple out of sight
Is this fair cup from human gaze withheld—
Not for such purpose did the Master weld
Its ample curves, and make it brim with light,
And on its border curious letters write
That must with patient, reverent care be spelled:
But, where life's fierce sirocco is not quelled,
With living water gleams the chalice bright.
Blind to the Rock that for their thirst was rent,
Under whose shadow in that weary land
The water turns to wine in sacrament,
The travellers, dazzled by the desert sand
And with the dreary journey well-nigh spent,
Still pass the 'cup of strength' from hand to hand.

AN MEINE FREUNDIN

SWEET recognition, when the soul looks out
Just for an instant from the unveiled eyes,
And love in either heart grows rich and wise,
Too glad for fear, too absolute for doubt!
As a ship in mid-ocean tossed about,
 Suddenly sighting with a glad surprise
 Another toiler under the same skies
To the same port, puts all her signals out,
So, when thy life my life's horizon crossed,
 A fellow-voyager to the far shore
Toward which I sailed, but one more strong and
 brave,
Whose courage had won much my faltering lost;—
Our hearts joined company, through wind and
 wave
And stress of weather, kin for evermore.

A PICTURE

(THE HOUSEBUILDERS.)

BRING hither trowel, carving-tool and knife :
Finish the stonework, plane the seasoned wood !
Let all the work be perfect ; sound and good ;
These two will build a house up,—man and wife,—
Its rooms made musical with joyous strife
 Of children's voices, and sweet hardihood
 Of laughter where each faithful friend has stood
The brunt of time. While on their future life,
Wistful, she gazes, he is fain to prove
 Her dream's foundations, marking the commands
 Of the great Architect, that when all's done,
Dug in the Rock and built of purest love,
They may possess a house not made with hands,
 Eternal in the heavens, for ever one.

THOMAS CARLYLE

I.

WHAT went ye out to see? A shaken reed,
Stirred into music by the lyric wind?
Or would ye bow before a regal mind,
Clothed in soft raiment of fair word and deed,
Sweetness and light, strong in the ancient creed
Of faith and hope and love, to bless mankind
With his consummate harmonies, and bind
The world to follow whither he might lead?
Why seek the waste and howling desert then?
Do kings and priests dwell in a wilderness
Of isolation? The Unseen has sent
A voice to trouble the dead lives of men.
This prophet came to curse and not to bless,
In echoing thunders moaning forth, 'Repent!'

II.

ON many a man descends the fire divine;
But foolish souls too oft its purpose foil
With false and idle tasks, that dim and soil
The lamp through which their light was meant to
shine;

Or, having squandered, mad with life's new wine,
The precious gift, and, scorning care or toil,
Burnt up too early all the sacred oil,
Their flame goes out: but the pure blaze in thine
Was tended reverently, lest it should waste
In careless splendour such as fools admire;
For all thy work was done with all thy might,
Lessening the darkness, without rest or haste.
Thy spark was kindled in that central fire,
To which thine eyes were dim, the Light of
Light.

*'BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE
NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE
BELIEVED'*

BLESSED are they who see not, yet believe—
Believe in love, in justice; and delight
To serve their wounded comrades through the
night
That closes round them; eager to achieve
Their patient task, they will not stay to grieve
That in their clouded heaven no radiance bright
Of a God's presence dawns on their dull sight,
No hope of future joy their hearts receive.
Love is the source of life; in Love they live:
Without the Eucharistic loaf or cup,
They are sustained by the true Bread and Wine;
Through Him their lives to save the world they give,
Daily their souls and bodies offering up
In the Eternal Sacrifice Divine.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Not that they bring us labour, pain, and care,
Do we turn pale when, ringing in our ears,
Is heard the gallop of the hurrying years,
And, foot in stirrup, we must onward fare;
Through joy and sorrow, death, and many a snare,
We seek our goal; not these our courage fears,
Nor the hard fighting that great Love endears;
But hourly choice that we must swiftly dare:
Yea, as we spring to horse, we tremble most
Knowing there must be, in the new year's flight,
Loved opportunities, seen, longed for, lost,
Which, choosing others, choosing at our cost,
We shall pass by, and leave far out of sight;
Friendships, achievements, deeds, a beckoning host.

TO A SNOWDROP

WHENCE art thou, lovely thing ?—Pure as the snow
That falls from heaven, art thou heaven-born ?
Did some bright seraph in the early morn
Visit the town, and, ere he turned to go,
On the bare gardens this glad gift bestow,
Leaving the snowdrops here to cheer the worn
Watchers of earth ?—Well might thy grace adorn
The fields of Paradise. Nay, but I know
That is not God's way. Not from the blue sky
Have angels brought thee: thy white flower must
Have risen from a rough ungenial soil ;
Like to life's poetry, that comes not by
A poet's dreams, but blossoms in the dust
Of lowly cares and patient-handed toil.

FROM EARLIEST POEMS

(PUBLISHED BEFORE 1880.)

THE DEAD SOUL

I DREAMED such a horrible dream last night,
It smote me through with a cold affright,
And would not go with the dawning light
 Like other lies;
For in dreams men often meet a guess,
Or a wandering thought in bodily dress,
A visible ‘No’ or a tangible ‘Yes’
 To some dim surmise.

What was that horrible thing I dreamed?
I met a man—or a man he seemed,
As the noonday sunlight over him streamed,
 Till, thrilled with dread,
I saw when my soul looked his soul through,
As only in dreams a soul can do,
That, though brain and body lived and grew,
 His soul was dead.

Yes, there he stood, a creature indeed,
That could walk and talk and drink and feed,
And add up figures, and write and read,
 And work and wed—

The Dead Soul

And all with automatic neatness,
Smiling even with studied sweetness,
And quite enjoying life's completeness,
 The life he led.

Till at last as I saw him standing there
With never a hope and never a care,
His dead soul set in a stony stare,

 ‘Poor soul,’ I said,
‘And wilt thou never feel again
Divinest joy, most God-like pain,
Love in which self is lost and slain ?
 Art thou quite dead ?’

And then in my pity I cried aloud,
‘Oh, give to this poor dead soul a shroud,
And hide him away from the living crowd
 In some narrow bed.

Oh, merciful heaven, give him a grave,
Or send some fire that will cleanse and save
And quicken again the soul God gave,
 The soul that’s dead !’

OMAR KHAYYAM,

THE ASTRONOMER-POET OF PERSIA

'With a poet's love of beauty, Omar willed that his tomb should be "in a spot where the north wind may scatter roses over it;" and his pupil, Khwajah Nizami, relates that he visited the poet's grave, and found it just outside a garden at Naishápúr, and saw that trees stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and dropped flowers upon the tomb, "so as the stone was hidden under them."'
Contemporary Review, March, 1876.

FRIEND, is it well with thee? Over thy grave,
Shapen like hearts the fallen rose-leaves lie,
That yester-night blushed pink against the sky,
And mocked the north wind with their splendour
brave.

Thou, who hast struggled where the tempests rave,
Where still the petals from life's blossom fly,
Blown by Time's breath,—thou who in vain
didst try
Joy's foaming wine-cup from Death's hand to save;
Hast thou at last the secret? Is the bound
Of human knowledge passed? Does He who
gave

Those passionate yearnings once to see Him, round
Thy being with His own? No more a slave,
Hast thou at last thy long-lost Father found,—
His love the fire that will consume and save?

A PROTEST

OH, hast thou never heard the Master come,
Or known Him near when in the silent night
Innumerable stars were looking down
The blue abyss ; when all the air was hushed,
Nor stirred the branches of the listening trees
Heavy with blossom, and the dewy flowers
Moved not a petal in the fragrant dark,—
Earth trembled at His footstep drawing near,
And over thee Space brooded with vast wings
Of wonder ?—

In the cool celestial light
That follows after sunset, when the far
Horizon of the infinite reflects
A distant radiance, and the ether, quick
With swift pulsations, quivers, passionate—
In such a moment hast not thou too known
A little of His meaning ?—Even as
Two friends who look each other in the eyes
Before they part, in that one look learn more
Each of the other than in all the hours
Of spoken thought.

Amid the blaze of noon,

A Protest

When heaven leans earthward, and the silent
sea,—

The sea of gold,—lies waiting for His feet,
Or glimmers opalescent underneath
The shadowy clouds ; has not thy spirit leaped,
Like some poor skylark prisoned from the sun,
Who through his narrow window feels a ray
Of summer greet him, and in ecstasy
Of longing beats against the bars, that hold
Him still a captive, thinking so to soar
Into the light and warmth and splendour ?—Oh,
Hast thou not felt that could thy soul's clear eyes
But pierce the flesh, thou wouldest behold Him, live
Thy life out in that moment, and then die
Of that great rapture ?—

Plucking a sweet rose,
Was it to thee mere colour, circling lines,
And delicate aroma ?—Yet unless
It bodied forth some lovely thought of God,
One ripple in the endless tide of love
Creative, wherefore should it move in thee
So subtle a delight ?—

Has music then
No message for thee from the invisible ?—
Is melody mere mathematic sound
Made rhythmic ?—Hast thou never felt therein
A greatness other than thyself, that caught
Thy half-despairing thought into its sweet
Magnificence of conflict till it rose
On quivering wings into the wordless joy

A Protest

Of a diviner possibility?—
Or, if thine ear be deaf, and tirèd eyes
A little blind, yet when some noble deed
Made the world echo, didst thou hear no voice
Greater than man's?—

What! hast thou never loved,
Or sinned, or suffered?—Oh, unhappy man!
In the uplifted gaze of struggling crowds
Who yearn for something higher than they reach,
And, dogged by sorrow, poverty, and death,
Still seek the unseen good, then, surely, then
Thou hast been stirred to kinship with thy race,
And known thy brethren in the sons of God,
The eternal Father?—Hast thou never met
In moments of supreme and awful grief
The Man of Sorrows?—Knowing not His name,
Hast thou not leaned upon His circling arms
And felt His Godhead?—Hast thou never found
In Him sublime compassion that could stoop
To save thee from thyself?—

If thou hast not,
What is this wondrous universe to thee
But a lone graveyard, soulless, animal,
A ghastly counterfeit of fair and grand
Imaginations.

Yet have courage: thou
Art seeking Him who wrestles with thee. Strive
With Him till He has told His name, and thou
Hast won a blessing!—Though the night endure
A dreary lifetime, when the morning breaks,

A Protest

What will the night be in the dawning joy
Of light ineffable ?—

Then wilt thou see
The gathered harvest of those toiling years
When the Immortal overshadowed thee,
And thou, being mortal, couldst not yet see God.
At last, beholding Him, thou wilt behold
Life's inmost meaning, love's deep mystery,
And all eternity will be thine own !

LOVE, NOT LOGIC.

(A FRAGMENT.)

O GOD! what am I but a hungry cry,
Cast out upon the void of silent night?
I see the distant worlds, revolving by,
And find no answer in their chilly light.

The beauteous earth, that lies about my feet,
Blooms ever into questions manifold;
For there are thorns on flowers that are sweet,
And each year's cycle ends in wintry cold.

The hearts I love are torn with grief and pain,
The lives most dear hang ever on a breath;
Thick grow the tares among the golden grain,
And Life walks ever hand in hand with Death.

From out the speck that is to me a world,
With aching eyes I question boundless space;
I watch heaven's curtain over me unfurled,
To see the far, dim shadow of Thy face.

I watch the sun, as through the heaven he rides,
With rosy clouds engirt, or golden light.

I watch the moon, that rules the silver tides,
Move on in solemn splendour through the night.

Love, not Logic

But still I find Thee not. In vain I try
To touch the border of Thy seamless robe:
The glorious raiment from my grasp doth fly,
And bears like glowing dust each sunlit globe.

For all the star-illumined sky we see
Is but one pattern on Thy mantle vast,
That sweeps the circles of eternity,
Where meet the future and th' unending past.

Time, as he flies, vouchsafeth no reply,
Nor drops one feather in his onward flight,
To mark his track, or tell me whence and why
He bears men on with wing'd, relentless might.

How shall I find Thee? I, one finite soul,—
Thee, who art self-existent and divine?
Yet, as a magnet seeks the distant pole,
My spirit resteth not, but seeketh Thine.

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

Redeemer, Father, Comforter, draw near,
For ever One—to love through Love revealed!
When, Death being dead, we see Thy face, and hear
Thy glorious voice, then shall all wounds
be healed,

All lives fulfilled, all darkness die in light,
All words be needless, love itself be speech,
All souls be perfected with heavenly might,
All strong to labour for the good of each.

CHRIST'S INVITATION

COME unto me, ye who are tired and sad ;
Come unto me, that I may give you rest ;
Come unto me, and I will make you glad ;
 Come and be blest.

Come, ye who struggle in a gulf of shame ;
Come, ye whose sin God only will forgive ;
Come ! for I have for you a new, white name ;
 Arise and live.

Come, ye who see not, through the misty night,
The stars that out of God's own windows shine ;
Come unto me, and I will give you light,
 Human, divine.

My heart is yearning with a strong desire
To fold the world in tender, close embrace ;
Come to me through the sanctifying fire
 That hides my face.

HYMNS FOR CHILDREN

I.

JESUS, the children are calling,
O, draw near!
Fold the young lambs in Thy bosom,
Shepherd dear!

Slow are our footsteps and failing,
Oft we fall;
Jesus, the children are calling,
Hear their call!

Cold is our love, Lord, and narrow;
Large is Thine,
Faithful and strong and tender;
So be mine!

Gently, Lord, lead Thou our mothers,—
Weary they;
Bless all our sisters and brothers,
Night and day.

Hymns for Children

Fathers themselves are God's children,
Teach them still!

Let the Good Spirit show all men
God's wise will.

Now to the Father, Son, Spirit,
Three in One,
Bountiful God of our fathers,
Praise be done!

II.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

WHAT though the snow be on the hill
 And winter in the weather,
With love and hope and sweet goodwill
 We keep the feast together:
Let heart with heart in joy accord
On this, the birthday of the Lord.

The Christ, our Lord, was once a Child :
 They laid Him in a manger.
The poor, the sick, the sin-defiled,
 The prisoner, and the stranger,
Plead with us for the love of Christ
To give what He has sacrificed.

O God ! At this Thy Christmas-tide
 Lay Thy dear hand upon us,
And if we wander from Thy side,
 Look Thou in pity on us ;
Even in the darkness of the night
Let us behold Thy guiding light !

III.

LORD, when we have not any light,
And mothers are asleep,
Then through the stillness of the night
Thy little children keep !

When shadows haunt the quiet room,
Help us to understand
That Thou art with us through the gloom,
To hold us by the hand.

And though we do not always see
The holy angels near,
O may we trust ourselves to Thee,
Nor have one foolish fear.

So in the morning may we wake,
When wakes the kindly sun,
More loving for our Father's sake
To each unloving one.

IV.

How shall we worship Thee, O Lord ?

What shall we bring
To Thee, our King,

By children and by men adored ?

More dear to Thee than prayer and praise
Are loyal deeds and patient days.

What can we give ? Thou dost desire

A steadfast will,
Obedient still,

And faithful work that does not tire :

More dear to Thee than prayer and praise
Are loyal deeds and patient days.

How easy in the golden light

Of summer hours,
Among the flowers,

To bless Thee for a world so bright !

More dear to Thee than prayer and praise
Are loyal deeds and patient days.

Hymns for Children

When sorrow darkens all our sky,
Life's blossoms lost
In sudden frost,
And all our courage like to die,
O! help us still Thy Name to praise
By loyal deeds and patient days.

In life, in death, in joy, and pain,
May we adore
Thee more and more,
Till love turn all our loss to gain,
And tune the years to perfect praise
In loyal deeds and patient days.

V.

OUR LORD became a servant
Among the poor and sad :
He toiled in weary patience
With all the strength He had.

With hate and with reviling
His service was repaid,
And all our heaviest burdens
Were on His shoulders laid.

He spent His life in service,
Rejected, scorned, defied ;
And then, to save the thankless,
In loving service died.

If we despise true service,
Or do not serve in turn,
We grieve His Holy Spirit,
It is Himself we spurn.

Hymns for Children

Rich harvests some are reaping,
Which He, the Servant, sowed,
And we may help the gleaners
To bear their homeward load.

Here in the world's wide corn-field,
If honest work we do,
Will come, in Love's own accents,
His 'Peace be unto you.'

TRANSLATIONS

A POEM OF HALM

My heart, I will but ask thee,
 What love is, how begun?—
‘Two souls and one existence,
 Two hearts that beat in one.’

And tell me whence love comes, then?—
 ‘Love comes and straight is here.’
And say, how does love vanish?—
 ‘Such was not love, ’tis clear.’

And which love is the purest?—
 ‘Forgetting self ’tis best.’
How mark the love that’s deepest?—
 ‘Tis stiller than the rest.’

And when is love the richest?—
 ‘When love a spendthrift proves.’
Tell me, what is love’s language?—
 ‘Love does not speak, but loves.’

FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT

O THOU, my soul, my very heart,
My sweet desire and pain thou art,
Thou, still the world wherein I live,
The heaven that wings to me can give,
The grave wherein I buried deep
My sorrow in eternal sleep!

Thou art my rest, the peace that's given
Straight to my inmost heart from heaven ;
Some worth I have, since loved by thee,—
Thy gaze makes fair myself to me.
Uplifted, blessed, in thee I find
My better self, my truer mind !

AFTER GOETHE

(A FRAGMENT OF 'FAUST.')

HAPPY the man who yet may hope to rise
Above the sea of error which assails him:—
Still for the moment's need no man is wise,
And, wisdom found, the chance to use it fails him.
But let not any mood of trouble seize
And mar this hour's fair gift for our possessing:
See how the homesteads, haloed by the trees,
Glimmer transfigured with the sun's last blessing.
Soft grows the light. Outlived now is the day;
The sun speeds hence, elsewhere earth's life
renewing.

Oh, will no wings uplift me that I may
Strive on and after, in his track pursuing,
See in the eternal sunset's gleam
On that still world below me sleeping,
The summits burn, the valleys dream,
The silver brook all golden onward sweeping!
By dark ravines or rugged mountain-steep
That god-like flight should not for me be bounded

After Goethe

Till opened out, by glowing bays surrounded,
On my astonished gaze, the boundless deep.
And though the sun at last seem fading, sinking,
'Tis a new race begins—the eternal light
My thirsty soul would evermore be drinking,
Day still before me, and behind me night,
Waves underneath me, heaven's blue dominion
Far overhead. Fair dream, swift vanishing!
Ah! not so easily the soul's light wing
Can mate itself with any earth-born pinion.
But still in every man is born that yearning
Onward and upward evermore to rise
When overhead the lark his song is learning,
Lost in the azure spaces of the skies;
When, wide upon the air his wings extending,
The eagle sweeps above the pine-clad height,
And far across the lakes and levels wending,
The crane unresting fares in homeward flight.

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By ANNIE MATHESON. Published by Rivington, Percival & Co.,
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[P. T. O.]

*Triumphant Love ! Now comes apace
Thy flood-tide that will leave no trace
Of Time and Death, dead, hand in hand.
Half-rooted in the desolate sand,
Heart-shapen, blooms Thy garb of grace,

Till, by thy waves, that conquer space,
The robe of that sweet flower's embrace
Be freed from Time's cold rocky strand,
Triumphant Love.*

*Sole King of an immortal race,
Though men Thy mortal name debase !
Thy feet upon the rock now stand,
Thy wings the infinite have spanned !
Unveil Thy power, reveal thy face,
Triumphant Love !*

Ruth Estelle Thompson

Tuesday July 1923

CHRISTMAS.

BY E. MATHESON.

With roseate light the East is all aglow ;
In tranquil beauty smiles the Christmas morn ;
And far across the softly lying snow
The bells send joyful tidings : Christ is born !

From glistening leaves the holly berries shew
Like coral beads against each wreathed wall ;
While gleams the pearl-hung branch of mistletoe
Alike in lowly home and stately hall.

Heart-sunshine brightens every glad young face ;
Even older folks, whose heads are turning gray,
Lay down Time's burdens for a little space,
And join the children in their happy play.

Sweet memories put forth their tender plea ;
Forgotten friendships press their claims once more ;
Unseen but felt, Faith, Hope and Charity
Walk through our midst as in the days of yore.

About our lives the old traditions cling ;
The old deep-rooted customs still abide—
Still in our hearts the "herald angels" sing ;
Let Peace and Goodwill reign at Christmas tide.

